

MAIN STREET UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 1992-2007

Harriet Mays

The May 27, 1993, issue of The Tie, Main Street Church's then weekly newsletter, featured an article which included this sentence: "Harry Mays will surely lead off his next history with 'The Launching.'" With great excitement the congregation had followed the building and naming (by six- year-old Ryan Patterson) of the Jesus Boat. On May 30 a good number gathered near Blazer's Restaurant on Lake Greenwood to see the boat launched. The Jesus Boat proved seaworthy and is now on display in the third grade classroom. Little did those present at the launching know how choppy the waters would be for Main Street United Methodist Church the next decade.

The Jesus Boat metaphor will go only so far. In reality, Main Street Church is the 1200 plus people who make up its membership and constituency - babies in the nursery, old folks confined to nursing facilities, and youth and adults seeking answers - people singing, praying, and working together. The church evolves and changes through the years. Today's Main Street would be strange to someone dropping in from a hundred years ago, or even fifty.

Lay leaders make mission statements, set goals, and try to achieve them. For example, in 1996 the Council on Ministries developed the following mission statement: "Our purpose at Main Street United Methodist Church is to worship God, to provide opportunities to grow in Christian faith, and to love and serve others in the name of Christ." In October 2002 the Board of Stewards shortened and broadened the statement to read: "The Mission of Main Street United Methodist Church is to be a community of disciples, calling all to Christ through love and example."

Ministers come and go making their own marks on the congregation. They wear many hats while serving as captain of the Jesus Boat. As Harry Mays said in the closing paragraphs of his 1992 History of Main Street United Methodist Church, "Each new pastor brings a particular blend of gifts and graces. These attributes merge with the aspirations of the congregation, providing for significant interplay." Such has been the case in the life of Main Street since 1992. This historical update, therefore, begins with the pastors, not because they are the most important, but because they are the most visible, and their years give us some pegs on which to hang the history.

PASTORS

1994 - 1996 The Rev. James O. Gilliam, Jr.

James O. Gilliam, Jr., followed Carlos Gardner as pastor in 1994, and he and his wife Carolyn were welcomed warmly. In June 1995, however, he wrote: "Our church in recent years has had some harsh days and fraying of relationships. . . My prayer and hope is that very soon Main Street will be known in the community and around the state as 'that church where people love one another and are a living witness to the power of the Christian faith.'"

After a two-year pastorate Jim Gilliam announced that his successor would be Dr. Gareth Scott, who for the past two years had been CEO of The Methodist Home (now Wesley Commons). He went on to say, "Nobody thought this interim period would be easy. God has blessed us in our struggles to be the Church. We are stronger than we were two years ago. Perspective is improving. Prospects for progress related to the real needs of persons of all ages are growing. Organization strength, committed lay leadership, a proposed new educational building, a new Director of Music is some of the reasons for optimism about Main Street's future."

1996 - 1998 Dr. Gareth Scott

Gareth Scott brought with him a business background as well as an ability to preach, but on September 5, 1996, he was hospitalized with pneumonia, returning to the pulpit on October 20. Early in 1997 his wife Fredna was diagnosed with breast cancer. A few months later Dr. Scott was granted a

three-month leave of absence to deal with his own prostate cancer. He wrote in the newsletter: "I came to Main Street to take care of you, but it appears the church is taking care of Fredna and me."

During Gareth Scott's illness the church staff worked well together. Secretary Esther Horne was in charge of the office, Music Director Shaw Thompson was second in command, Kathy Kelly had the church programs under control, Amy Price was working well with the youth, and Gail Carnes (with members Fred Calfee and Charles Schulze) was taking good care of finances. Dr. C. J. Lupo, Jr., pastor of Main Street from 1985 to 1989 who was retired and living forty miles away in Anderson, filled the pulpit during Dr. Scott's recuperation from surgery. The pastor wrote, "Be kind to the staff. They do much more than anyone knows."

1998 - 2002 The Rev. Larry Jenkins

The Scotts were at Main Street for two years when Bishop J. Lawrence McLeskey decided that he needed the now recovered Gareth Scott on his cabinet as District Superintendent of the Greenville District. In 1998 Larry Jenkins was appointed to serve as pastor of Main Street United Methodist Church.

Jenkins was able to bring stability back to the church and help guide the efforts toward renovation and expansion of facilities. But the Jenkinsees were looking toward retirement. They had already bought their own home for retirement in Greenwood and were living in it. The congregation appreciated Larry Jenkins tremendously for his thoughtful sermons and his wise counsel, but they understood his desire to have a lighter load. They were simply happy that he stayed four years.

2002 - 2004 The Rev. Patricia Griffith-Fallaw

When District Superintendent Taylor Campbell told Main Street that the new minister would be the Reverend Patricia Griffith-Fallaw, some eyebrows were raised. Women had served Main Street in the past as Associate Pastors, and a woman had served as Greenwood District Superintendent, but Senior Pastor of Main Street Church? Some members weren't so sure. It did not take long for that questioning to cease. When Patty Griffith-Fallaw, her husband Billy, and children Will and Ann Morgan moved into the newly purchased, furnished, and decorated parsonage in Timberlake, they had already begun to win the hearts of the congregation.

Realizing that Main Street Church's Jesus Boat had been through some trying times (those choppy waters) and coming from a successful ten-year pastorate, Patty committed herself to a long-term pastorate at Main Street. She, the District Superintendent, and the Staff-Parish Committee agreed that she had what it would take to steer the church through a building program and well into the twenty-first century.

Busy and enthusiastic, Patty started orientation classes at the Sunday School hour every quarter for prospective members, and had 30 in the first class. She also led the Board of Stewards in a planning retreat. In January 2003 she wrote: "Membership and attendance in worship are increasing, participation in Bible Study, Sunday School, mission and outreach and church activities are increasing. There is a strong sense of enthusiasm and excitement about what shared ministry with and through Main Street Church can mean."

Building plans, church programs, and a contagious excitement continued through 2003, but in the fall a cloud appeared on the horizon. The Jesus Boat was about to have to weather another storm. Patty's cancer, thought to be in remission, resurfaced. At the same time she was pregnant and gave birth to Charles Ross Fallaw on December 4. While happy to have a new baby in the parsonage, the congregation was concerned and prayerful about their pastor's health. The December 14 bulletin carried "A Prayer for Patty" by Jason Balentine: "A prayer for Patty for the Lord to set her free. A prayer for Patty and our faith will turn the key. So pray, please pray for Patty."

2004 - The Rev. James D. Dennis, Jr.

Patty's maternity leave was over in March 2004, and she preached and carried out her other duties as much as she could during March and April. On April 21 Bishop J. Lawrence McLeskey, along with other ordained elders, held a Healing Service at Main Street Church. The newsletter stated, "This will be a service for all persons suffering from physical illness, emotional distress, grief, depression, addiction, anxiety, broken relationships, sin, and guilt, and is open to the entire community. All in need of healing are urged to attend this special service. . . ."

On April 25 Patty preached her last sermon at Main Street, and the congregation honored the family with a covered dish dinner. For the seven weeks before Annual Conference and the appointment of a new minister the Rev. Larry Jenkins was able to serve as interim minister, giving the members the reassurance they needed even as they continued to grieve Patty's departure.

Main Street's congregation welcomed the Rev. James D. Dennis, Jr., and his family with a picnic at West Cambridge Park on June 20, 2004. Jim and Caroline Dennis brought with them Christina, a college student, and David, recently graduated. Another daughter, Alison, is married to a minister and was a student in the law school at the University of South Carolina.

Jim Dennis wrote in his first note on the front of the newsletter: "I wish there were a way to fast forward the pastor-parish relationship. I also lament that the occasion of our coming together is overshadowed by the sadness concerning Patty, our friend and colleague. . . . God has brought us together - who knows what adventures lie ahead?"

The congregation soon discovered that ahead lay Sunday after Sunday of well-crafted sermons, biblical but not boring, challenging and stimulating. Being good Methodists, the congregation knew that each pastor brings his or her own special gifts to each church and that each one is unique.

When word of Patty Griffith-Fallaw's death came in April 2006, Jim wrote, ". . . Patty was forward-looking and full of life and hope for young families and for the future of Main Street Church. The dream that you and Patty conceived is now a reality - the children and youth here and yet to come will benefit from the programs and love we offer in Jesus' name. . . . We give God glory for her life and ministry. . . . 'We are God's fellow workers, we are God's field, we are God's building. . . .' so let us all work and be fruitful and build while we may. . . ." And the congregation appreciated Jim all the more for those compassionate words.

STAFF

Professional leadership may come from pastors, but any church - or Jesus Boat - like Main Street would be dead in the water without the church members and employed staff.

Two current (2007) staff members have been on board during all the time covered by this update. Kathy Kelly began working with the children and music in the 1980s. She later became Director of Children's Activities, and in 1996 she became full-time Director of Programs, her current job title. A Jack (or Jill) of all trades, including culinary arts and carpentry, she is invaluable. Joyce Nickles has been Main Street's talented organist since December 1989, and on several occasions she has been persuaded to serve also as interim Director of Music while a search was underway. Joyce moved her Kindermusik Studio to the Asbury Outreach Center in 2007, helping to introduce more young families to Main Street Church.

Through the years, especially when no associate minister was available, the part-time position of Minister of Visitation has been filled by retired ministers who were part of the congregation. Following Dr. Bryce Herbert the Rev. Hoyt Graham began serving in 1992, continuing for several years, and the Rev. Lewis Sherard served in this capacity until his death in September of 2007. Their hospital and shut-in visitation has been a blessing to the congregation and a great help to the busy senior pastors.

Two church members with training in pastoral counseling, Diana Helfrich and Kathy Carr, also have served as hospital/shut-in visitors in recent years.

In June 2003 the Board of Stewards made the decision to take part in the Congregational Nursing Program being sponsored by Self Regional Health Care for the Greenwood community. The hospital agreed to pay 100% of a nurse's salary for the first year and a smaller percentage in succeeding years until the church assumed 100% the fifth year. Church member Lee Robirds RN was available and willing to accept the challenge. In October 2003 she began work forming a Health Cabinet to assess and address the needs of the congregation. She offers blood pressure checks periodically on Sunday mornings, assists the pastor with hospital and home visits, and publishes "Stat Facts for Body, Mind, and Spirit" in the newsletter. She has organized a blood drive and participation in Relay for Life, given hearing and bone density tests, and been available to answer many questions.

Church secretaries are among the unsung heroes of church history. Following Jan Marshall in 1993 was Esther Horne, whose happy personality and knowledge of United Methodism filled a great need in the office. The only drawback was that she had to leave when her husband Wayne, who was minister at St. Mark Church, was moved to Greenville in June 1998. Emmie Parrish Burns, who had grown up in Main Street Church but moved to St. Mark with her husband, became church secretary at that time and has served well ever since, providing a familiar face and friendly voice to greet the myriad of calls and visits to the church office. Katherine Barwick was a great help in the office as a part-time secretary from 1991 through 1993, and more recently Cindy Harris has served as part-time assistant secretary with Phyllis Hockett also filling in.

Helen Bridges became financial secretary in 1995 and served briefly. Then Gail Carnes answered the call for a financial secretary in February 1996 and continues to serve efficiently and quietly every Monday and Tuesday.

Bob Harmon resigned the position of Building Superintendent/Host in April 1993, and was followed by Matthew Proctor and Bob Underwood for a short time each and then William Johnson. When Johnson moved on in 2004, member Gene Ouzts served efficiently as interim superintendent for three months until Bill White began work in December. A number of hard-working janitors have also worked under the direction of the superintendent. For a time, Main Street employed a kitchen worker to prepare the Sunday morning breakfasts and to help with Wednesday suppers.

Youth Workers

Paul Frey served as Associate Minister for five years, leaving in 1992. His work was mainly with the youth of the church, but he and his wife Ruth Anne were much appreciated by the entire membership. The Paul Frey Sunday School Class bears his name.

Mike Smith, a young Lander graduate who worked at radio station WCRS as an announcer, followed Paul Frey, first as Director of Youth Ministries and then as Associate Minister. He came from a Baptist/Presbyterian background, but through the United Methodist Youth Fellowship and friendship with several United Methodist pastors, he felt God calling him to ministry. When he met with the Staff-Parish Relations Committee for a job interview, the outcome was that he would work fulltime as Main Street's youth director and begin to pursue his seminary education at Erskine, becoming a member of Main Street and beginning to fulfill candidacy requirements for the United Methodist ministry. Main Street's charge conference approved his candidacy on April 18, 1993. Mike reports that after he began working at Main Street the retired clergy there were probably responsible for the greatest part of his theological education. After his ordination Dr. Bryce Herbert and the Rev. John Shingler each gave him a stole they had worn.

During a time when Main Street's Jesus Boat was facing stormy winds, Mike Smith was able to keep the youth program active and the numbers of youth growing. In 1994 and 1995 Mike was named one of 48 Outstanding Youth Workers in the US and Canada from among 3,700 youth workers. The judges were especially impressed with his emphasis on mission activity with the youth. In June 1996, after five years at Main Street, Mike took his final trip with the youth to Rural Mission on Johns Island and moved to become pastor of his own local church.

Amy Price, an energetic young woman, became Director of Youth Ministries in September 1996. Amy took the first group of youth from Main Street to work with the Salkehatchie program, a week-long work experience which has been life changing for many youth as it has continued through the summers since. Amy moved to Greenville after two years at Main Street.

Adrian Rogers was employed for the Youth Ministries position in September 1998 and continued until early 2003. The youth appreciated Adrian, who encouraged them to participate in the Conference Youth Retreats at Myrtle Beach, and continued their mission trips and Salkehatchie participation. The entire church loved his young family.

Talented church member Kathryn Thompson-Feith filled the interim position of Youth Team Leader until Jack Carmody, a recent Presbyterian College graduate, came on board as Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries in May 2004. Jack was a guitarist who shared his skills with interested youth. His leadership emphasized prayer and spirituality, and his marriage to Carrie provided excitement among the youth. The youth will remember Jack's leadership of a succession of mission trips. But Jack was feeling the call to the ministry and left Main Street in the spring of 2007 to go to seminary.

Jessica Morris, a college student from Lander and Piedmont Tech who had become a part of the student group at the church, was employed as interim summer youth worker and quickly won the confidence of the youth as she accompanied them to their Salkehatchie site and helped plan their activities.

Music Ministry

Main Street Church has for many years been justly proud of its music program, so in October 1993 when Beverly Psomas resigned, the congregation wrung its collective hands. Beverly had served as Director of Music for six years and at that time had, in addition to the Chancel Choir, a men's choir, two adult bell choirs, a youth bell and guitar choir, a children's handchime/bell choir, and Celebration I and II for children.

Sally Kaufman of Greenwood agreed to serve as interim director while the search began for Beverly's replacement. Even after Loren Pinkerman was hired, she continued working with the children's music program. Because Pinkerman lived quite a distance from Greenwood he stayed only from June 1994 through April 1995. When he left Joyce Nickles began one of her interim music director stints in addition to her organist duties.

Finally Shaw Thompson, a young man from Florence, South Carolina, began work as Director of Music in July 1996. Shaw had considerable musical qualifications and a beautiful tenor voice. Not only that. He was engaged to Rebecca, a talented soprano. When she joined him in Greenwood the next January, the two of them shared their talents with the Greenwood community as well as the church. Shaw was determined to make the Main Street congregation more musically literate, and included interesting tidbits about the choir's anthems in each Sunday bulletin. The choirs in 2000 were Chancel Choir for ages 15 and up, Adult Handbells, Main Street Singers for grades 3 through 6, Cherub Choir for 4 years through 2nd grade, and Youth Bells for Grades 3 and up. Talented volunteers from the congregation helped with the leadership of the children's choirs, and in 2001 Joyce Nickles began leading music for pre-schoolers at 9:45 AM before Sunday School.

Shaw, a man of many talents, also helped with the church's computer system and bulletins. In 1998 his title was changed to Director of Music and Communications. But on July 1, 2001, the congregation found itself hosting a farewell dinner for Shaw and Rebecca. Shaw had decided he needed to return to Florence to work in his family's business.

Once again the search began for a music director, and once again Joyce Nickles, this time along with David Byars, filled in as interim director.

Main Street was blessed in the summer of 2001 when a young woman was finishing her church

music degree at Perkins School of Theology in Dallas, Texas, and wanted to move back east. Kelli Mullinix started work at Main Street Church on October 1. In addition to her musical knowledge she brought with her a needed expertise in handbells, and her work with the children's choirs was thorough and fun. Each year she took the Angel Choir to Atlanta to the Choristers Guild Children's Choir Festival. She began the Main Street Arts Academy for children in grades 1 through 6, a five-day summer program to give children from the church and from the community the chance to express themselves through music, visual arts, and drama. Kelli shared her lovely soprano voice generously in many ways, inside and outside the church. When the "8:28 Celebrate" early Sunday morning contemporary worship began, Kelli played a major part in planning and carrying it out.

In 2004 the Charge Conference recommended Kelli as a candidate for the office of Deacon in the United Methodist Church. Deacons are non-itinerant and ordained to Service and Word as opposed to elders who are ordained to Service, Word, Sacrament, and Order and are subject to appointment by the bishop. Kelli's ordination date is set for June 2008.

The congregation celebrated with Kelli and her husband Dan when their first child, Lathem, was born in 2004. When the second baby, Mary Grace, arrived on May 8, 2007, the congregation reluctantly agreed that it was best for her to stay home with her children. Main Street delighted in the fact that "home" would remain in Greenwood.

Joyce Nickles again became interim director and even agreed to plan and carry out the popular summer Arts Academy where over half the children attending were from outside Main Street Church. The Staff-Parish Committee began another search, and the first Sunday in November 2007 saw Larry Moore, who came all the way from California but has Carolina connections, in the position of Director of Music Ministries.

One who devoted over thirty years of faithful service to the music ministry as organist of Main Street Church was William N. Bobo. He retired in 1986 but served as substitute when called on for years after his retirement. He was honored in 2001 with the gift of a Christian flag for the chancel area by the Rev. and Mrs. James D. Medley. The History Room became the home of the United Methodist Church banner originally given in honor of Bobo in 1977. The sudden death of William Bobo on January 18, 2005, was a shock to the congregation. In his memory and in recognition of his many years of dedicated service to church music, the church presented the Columbia College Choir in concert on April 1, 2006. This was particularly appropriate in light of a generous bequest William Bobo had made to Columbia College.

Another faithful choir member honored by the church was Evelyn Martin. With a beautifully trained soprano voice Evelyn had opportunities to pursue a career in music, but she made the decision to stay in Greenwood with her mother and to teach school. In 1993 she retired from the choir with special recognition after 50 years of service.

BUILDING CONCERNS

In 1993 church records show a deep concern for the upkeep of Main Street Church's properties, as well as a recognition of the need to renovate and expand. Along with those concerns, however, came discussions of how to raise the money. Even the children became involved in the effort with their Penny Box in 1993 and in later years their offering baskets gathering coins as they went down front for Children's Time. These activities were to help improve the children's division classrooms. But, only the parking lot was improved during 1993.

A committee was appointed in 1994 to study short-range/long-range needs, and a building fund was established. Joe Chandler spoke to the congregation to report on immediate needs: 1. Soffits and gutters were falling apart on the west side. 2. Mechanical systems were antiquated. 3. Twenty-eight old type windows needed replacement. 4. A security-fire alarm system was needed for office and sanctuary areas.

In 1995 the hard-working trustees made many of the needed repairs, put new speakers in the

sanctuary, and painted the nursery area.

The long-range planning committee employed Catalyst, Inc., an architectural firm in Columbia, to assist in planning for the future. Board members themselves paid \$4,650 of the \$9,150 Catalyst fee. The plan that the firm submitted recommended demolishing the elementary and nursery areas, and the Lawton and Drake classrooms, and constructing a new classroom building over the old parsonage site. The plan also included an amphitheater over the fellowship hall with classrooms.

In order to conserve expenses, the Board of Stewards and Charge Conference voted to sell the associate minister's Westgate Parsonage and to give Mike Smith a parsonage allowance.

At a called Charge Conference in July of 1996 the trustees recommended: 1. Incorporating the church to relieve the trustees from liability, 2. Selling the Kenilworth parsonage since the new pastor (Dr. Gareth Scott) would be living in his own home. Proceeds would go toward a new parsonage at a later date. 3. Setting up a building committee to proceed toward replacement of the west wing as recommended by Catalyst. The motions passed overwhelmingly; however, this particular building plan was not carried out because of financial constraints. Later, when renovation began, the architect did incorporate a few of the Catalyst suggestions, according to Ken Flinchum.

Church Historian Miriam Alewine and the History Committee worked on the area opposite the side entrance to the sanctuary (now part of the choir room) to arrange an inviting space to display artifacts, pictures, and church historical items. This History Room was dedicated on November 17. (The History Room is now located upstairs in the Cokesbury Building opposite the Mason Class Room.)

With funds from the Main Street Foundation, in 1997 the sanctuary was painted and carpeted.

Because of the pressing need for more parking spaces, the trustees purchased the Byrd house across Cambridge Street adjacent to the church parking lot. Money from a recent bequest was available to help with this purchase, and improvements were made on the parking lot. Finally in 2001, after many efforts to find another solution, and even an offer to buy that fell through, the Byrd house was torn down, serving a useful purpose as a training site for the Fire Department.

With a new pastor coming in 1998 and no parsonage, the Board of Stewards appointed a parsonage committee. They found a few houses but none for the \$174,000 available from the sale of the two former parsonages. With a recommendation to buy a particular home which met parsonage standards for \$219,500, the Board of Stewards waited for the new pastor to arrive before making a final decision. When Larry and Eleanor Jenkins arrived in June, they first moved into a leased house and then announced their decision to buy their own home since their next move would be to retirement. The parsonage decision was on hold again with the church giving the pastor a parsonage allowance.

Recognizing that the church's physical structure had reached a critical point in 1999, the church trustees and the Foundation asked Ken Flinchum to volunteer his time to help develop a plan that would lead Main Street United Methodist Church into the future. They called on the congregation to offer their help when Flinchum made personal calls. Late in the year Board of Stewards Chairperson Mary Lynn Polk appointed a long-range steering committee to deal with important long range issues facing the church.

In 2000, the Board of Stewards decided the first phase of a renovation plan would include installation of an elevator and new air conditioning in the church kitchen. The elevator filled an open space between the "old" building and the newer office/educational building, now named the Cambridge Building and the Cokesbury Building. This space had been the site of a lovely garden donated by Margaret Tinsley in memory of her husband, William D. Tinsley. The elevator met a long-felt need and made the second floor accessible to Sunday School class members who were finding the stairs much more difficult than they used to be.

The need for a new roof for the entire church required a decision in 2001 from the Board of Stewards to find \$98,000 to pay for it at the same time that renovations were under consideration and a new parsonage had to be found for a new pastor coming in 2002. Since it was protected, the Renovation Fund could not be used for the roof. The Finance Committee was able to raise \$30,000 outside the budget and borrowed the remainder.

Main Street Church leaders had long been concerned about the lack of space for expansion and for parking. When they learned in 2002 that the Chipley House next door was being vacated by Citizens Trust, they began negotiations to buy the property and were able to secure it for \$600,000. A Matching Gift Fund was begun when one member offered to match up to \$200,000, which the congregation met. In the spring of 2002 they were able to close on the sale using part of the Renovation Fund for the remaining funds needed to complete the purchase. Until the company was ready to move, the church rented the building to Citizens Trust. Then, when renovation work and building began for the church, the church offices were moved temporarily to the Chipley Building, soon to be renamed Susanna Wesley Building.

The Building Committee (Pierce Stockman, chairperson; Caprice Corbett, Shell Dula, Jim Garner, Cecil Gray, Kathy Kelly, Philip Nickles, Jo Patterson, Cele Shelley, Lorraine Stockman, the Rev. Patty Griffith-Fallow) was busy overseeing the completion of Phase One of the renovation, which included handicap accessibility, the elevator, ramps, and the kitchen air conditioning for \$259,093.47. Working with the architect, John Clayton, on plans for the new building for children and youth, gathering ideas from Sunday School classes and from a survey sent to all members, the committee shared the plans and architectural studies through informational meetings with the members.

In 2003 the congregation heard exciting plans about a new building, parking with access to East Cambridge Street, and additional renovations in the existing buildings. These renovations included new restrooms near the sanctuary and a new and larger choir room, which entailed moving the History Room upstairs to the previous New Horizons Classroom.

The trustees were faced with other needs, too, which included some unexpected work on the parsonage and grounds having to do with drainage and mold.

On January 11, 2004, a Church Conference was held to approve the recommendation of a contractor for Phase I of the Master Plan and to approve the Financial Plan. In March work on the parking lots began, and on April 18 a ground-breaking service was held for the new education building. Offices were moved temporarily to the Chipley House, and good neighbor Presbyterians allowed parking across the street during the week.

A fund-raising project began to buy furnishings for the new building; memorial bricks sold for \$100 and granite markers for \$500, which would be used in the paved area between the fellowship hall and new building and on the sidewalks. A total of \$45,488.50 was raised for this project.

The congregation followed construction progress in the bulletin each week. As the sheetrock was hung in the new building, classes of children and youth enjoyed a unique opportunity. On two special Sundays the children and youth entered the construction site wearing plastic "hard hats" to place their names and favorite Bible verses on studs in their new classrooms. Babies and pre-schoolers had their names and handprints added to their rooms. Kathy Kelly wrote in the newsletter, "These will serve as a permanent reminder to all that Christian education is founded in the scriptures and should be the support of all activities that will take place in the new building."

Earlier, adults had had the opportunity to write a scripture passage and their names on beams to be placed in the building. Although these writings are hidden, the congregation treasures the memories of this experience.

In 2005, new names were announced for the expanding campus: The sanctuary building became the Cambridge Building, the office/fellowship/classroom building became the Cokesbury Building, the new building is the Asbury Outreach Center, and the Chipley House became the Susanna Wesley Building. The naming tried to incorporate Methodist history as well as function, particularly in the new building, which was envisioned to be a way to serve the community as well as the congregation. (Interesting to note is that Main Street's use of the Susanna Wesley Building is the fourth incarnation of the 1920s era Chipley House. It was first the home of a prominent Greenwood family and Main Street Church members,

second the site of Blyth Funeral Home, and third the location of Citizens Trust Company.)

Many rain delays meant that the consecration of the new Asbury Outreach Center had to be postponed several times. Finally on June 12, 2005, Main Street members gathered joyfully for worship, dinner, and the consecration service. They toured the new facilities, praised God, and tried to express their appreciation to the hard-working building committee, the Rev. Jim Dennis, the Rev. Patty Griffith-Fallow, and many others who had worked long and hard to bring the project to completion.

Uses of the new facilities had been the stuff of dreams and now were becoming reality. The Board of Stewards approved Joyce Nickles' Kindermusik classes for the Asbury Center and the Agape Pastoral Counseling Center for an office in the Susanna Wesley House. Caroline Dennis, a trained, certified counselor, would operate the counseling center as a non-profit agency answering to its own board of trustees.

In addition to the children's and youth Sunday School classes in the building, the Asbury Outreach Center gym began to be used for yoga, moms and tots class, basketball tournaments, and open gym time for the youth. Three Girl Scout troops also began meeting there. The Susanna Wesley Building housed the Girl Scout office, the Agape Pastoral Counseling Center, and the United Methodist Student Fellowship. United Methodist Women use it for some meetings, and later a new adult Sunday School class, Cornerstone, began to meet there. Uses continue to evolve as needs surface.

Amid the celebration, the church trustees had to remind the congregation that they were unable to take care of needed maintenance of the older buildings because of lack of funds. They reported that the church basement, used by Boy Scouts, had been given a much needed renovation by Gene Ouzts, Billy Dukes, Charlie Maloney, Ken Flinchum, and Lomax Murphy.

The trustees continued with needed improvements in 2006. A new sound system in the sanctuary enhanced the worship services. New directional signs were placed outside all the church buildings. Joe Chandler saved the church \$30,000 when he renovated the Bell Tower, and Bill White put lights in the tower windows.

The trustees reminded the congregation that "the new building still has its guarantee in place, but the old building and sanctuary only have you and me." The Trustees urged the congregation to give gifts to their Discretionary Fund to provide the needed care for the buildings.

Several adult Sunday School classes answered the call to "Adopt an Area" to help with grounds upkeep.

In February of 2007 the Board of Stewards approved the expansion of Mud Pies Creative Learning to a five-day-a-week pre-school program using the children's area of the Asbury Outreach Center. (It had begun as Parents Morning Out once a week in 2005 and expanded to two days with a name change in 2006.) Jamie Lyles, director, described Mud Pies as structured into classes from infant to four-year-old kindergarten that would include music, art, early exposure to religious activities, reading, and creative play. Mud Pies would operate from 8:30 AM to 12 noon, would have its own supplies, and, though a program of the church, it would have its own board and would be self-sustaining.

Through some misunderstandings and unwise decisions, a previous pre-school program called Cheerful Cherubs had moved, along with its name, to First Baptist Church. The formation of Mud Pies was seen by many as rectification of the unfortunate loss of Cheerful Cherubs in 1995.

MONEY

A look at church records for the last fifteen years shows periods of concern and yet other indications of amazingly generous sharing by some members of the congregation. Main Street has tried always to pay its share of conference apportionments, that portion of the budget that supports United Methodist missions and programs in our state, nation, and the world. Most years in the last fifteen have seen Main Street pay its apportionments in full. The Finance Committee often told the Board that cash

flow was close, that money was coming in for many designated needs, but that the operating budget was in trouble. Always the report was that Main Street did not collect what was budgeted, but neither did it spend what was budgeted. See the appendix for graphs detailing this.

The Main Street Foundation has often assumed responsibility for items in the operating budget. In 2002, for example, the Foundation reported assets of \$379,534.02 at the end of May and distribution of \$208,572.04 to church projects since 1986. In 2000 the Foundation paid approximately \$20,000 to underwrite architect fees for the renovation. In 2002 they paid \$38,000 for parsonage and roof repair that would normally have come from the operating budget.

The long-discussed renovation began July 24, 2000. Designed in three phases, Phase One (making the church handicapped accessible, the elevator and the building to house it, kitchen air conditioning) was projected to cost \$236,028. Phase Two (replacement of worn out and outdated HVAC equipment) was approximately \$650,000. Phase Three (renovation of the children's area for different uses) was to be \$150,000.

With the decision to renovate and build a new building came the need for a Capital Campaign. The Campaign committee, chaired by Rhett Blaker, set out to inform and enlist the congregation in Building Disciples, the campaign title. The campaign brochure states: "The life of Main Street United Methodist Church is reflected in our covenant with Christ and in our ministry. The historic sanctuary and the stained glass are breathtakingly beautiful, but the elementary building has declined beyond repair. The original building, constructed in the 1940s, has deteriorated leaving crumbling mortar, mold, declining HVAC, antiquated utility systems, and inefficient design.

"This capital campaign seeks to raise \$3.2 million that will expand our ministry into the community, support the responsibility of teaching our children, and broaden the services to our members."

Earmarked for the new educational and multi-purpose building was \$1,606,800 of the \$3.2 million. The remainder was for parking and landscaping, renovation of choir and handbell room, HVAC for the existing buildings, furnishings, demolition of two old buildings on the property, and permits and design fees.

The initial campaign goal for the first three years (2004-2006) was \$1.5 million, and, with the enthusiastic participation of many members, was successful in obtaining pledges for \$1,378,826 and \$1,487,112 was paid in the three-year period. In a follow-up campaign for the years 2007, 2008, and 2009, led by the Rev. Charles A. Graves, members pledged \$1,119,124.

Statement about successful balloon payments in 2007.

MISSIONS AND OUTREACH

Interest in and commitment to helping those outside the walls of Main Street Church has grown in the last fifteen years. This commitment has ranged from helping to support Frank and Carolyn Horton, missionaries to Liberia, to sending warm fuzzies to Epworth Children's Home and teddy bears to Rural Mission on Johns Island. From numerous mission trips both within and outside America to serving in the local soup kitchen and the local United Ministries program, clearly Main Street continues to be a church dedicated to reaching out in love and service.

Backyard Bible Club is one example of this reaching out. Begun in April 1997, this outreach to children in the Magnolia Park area of uptown Greenwood grew out of one of the Disciple Bible Study classes. Glenn and Allie Williams spearheaded it with help from many other volunteers and they continue to give selfless leadership and service. Volunteers tell Bible stories, lead games, crafts, and songs, and provide snacks for up to 80 children on the third Saturday of each month.

In February 2001 Backyard Bible Club started a Sunday School in two of the Greenwood Housing

Authority communities. The school ran for several years with leadership from the Williamses, Kit Adkins, Pam Faulkner, Karen Carr, and Bayard Lindell. Meeting on Sundays after regular church time, it included a lunch for the children along with their Bible stories.

In 2006 the church established a scholarship to help Backyard Bible Club children further their education. Called the Saints Scholarship, it honors four Main Street women: Louise Arnold, Anna Lector Stockman, Margaret Tinsley, and Flo Young, who have been dedicated to Backyard Bible Club since its beginning and have worked diligently to ensure its success. The scholarship is managed by the Main Street Foundation and will be awarded annually by the Backyard Bible Club officers.

Because of Main Street's experience with Backyard Bible Club, the conference has sent two Summer Investment Program workers each year since 2001. The SIP workers, who are college students, are in Greenwood for seven weeks each summer. They, with guidance and support from Main Street, work with children in targeted areas with Backyard Bible Club activities. They also help with Main Street's Vacation Bible School and children's activities.

Participation in the South Carolina Conference's Salkehatchie program has been life changing for many of Main Street's youth and their adult leaders. Each summer since 1996 a team has traveled to another South Carolina location to repair roofs, flooring, bathrooms, and kitchens working for a week in challenging circumstances. Volunteers return to tell the congregation of the bonds formed with families they have grown to love as well as the skills they have learned.

Pastor Jim Dennis, who has had experience running Salkehatchie camps, led Main Street to host a camp in addition to sending youth and adults to work at other camps. Camps were held in Greenwood in 2005 and 2007 with workers coming from other locations to work on houses of those in need in our community. (The policy is always to send teams away from home to avoid any possible embarrassment to the families receiving aid.) Director of Programs Kathy Kelly has been indispensable in her leadership of Salkehatchie through the years.

Skills gained through Salkehatchie were put to good use when youth and adults answered the call to help on the Gulf Coast after Hurricane Katrina in September 2005. Teams from Main Street have made numerous trips to Vancleave, Mississippi, to help with the cleanup there. Joe Chandler took heavy equipment and workers from his construction business to help for a week. The congregation helped in other ways as well, preparing flood buckets and health kits, and with a special \$7606 offering for hurricane relief. (I have put this under Signs of the Times. Check it.) This outreach activity resulted in Main Street's formation of a Community Emergency Response Team composed of Caroline Dennis, Joe Chandler, Karl Kelly, Jim Kelly, Bill Logan, and Rudy Powell. These individuals are now certified First Responders for the surrounding area and are available when called for United Methodist Volunteers in Mission.

Main Street members have been willing to venture out to share their Christian faith beyond the bounds of the United States, and other members have been willing to work on fund-raising meals or to give money to help. Members have taken mission trips to Brazil, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Cuba, and Honduras with sharing times at Family Nights after each trip.

In 2003 Main Street agreed to help sponsor a Somali Bantu family. Ali Osman Noor, Saniyo Abdi, and their six children arrived in Columbia the next year under the auspices of Church World Service. Co-sponsoring with Mt. Horeb United Methodist Church, a church in Lexington that provided hands-on aid, Main Street sent a truckload of donated furniture and household items, money for the refugee program, and toys and educational materials to the children's tutoring center.

Outreach to the Greenwood community is a constant by individual members and by groups in the church. For example:

In December 1995 Main Street helped with a Community Dinner for 300 people, and the youth not only helped serve but also provided music.

In 1996 members became regular volunteers at the new location of Greater Greenwood United

Ministries and at the Spring Street Habitat for Humanity site.

The Missions Work Area raised \$2000 with a church plate project for missionaries Marion and Anita Way in Brazil and for local missions as well.

In 1997 the Free Medical Clinic of Greater Greenwood United Ministries began. Main Street and other churches have provided volunteers and furnished snack suppers for the volunteer medical workers.

Main Street joined other Greenwood churches in sponsoring a Feast for Peace held at Magnolia Park with over 450 persons present representing many different ethnic groups who live nearby.

United Methodist Women collected gifts (socks, paper, pencils, shampoo) for youth in the Greenwood Department of Juvenile Justice Facility.

Our youth sponsored the community Crop Walk, a Church World Service program to help feed the hungry around the world.

United Methodist Women members formed a circle (Turning Point) at Leath Women's Correctional Center and visit and mentor each month. This outreach has been ongoing since 2003.

Main Street furnished space and a teacher (Dave Chastain) for the Greenwood District's Hispanic Ministry English as a Second Language program. This outreach attracted a number of people interested in learning Spanish but only one Mexican woman. The toys collected for the expected Hispanic children were given to the Somali Bantu program.

"Operation Warmth" collects coats for local people in need.

Main Street's Food Pantry, open on Thursday afternoons, is operated by volunteers and supplied by contributions from members.

United Methodist Men have built _____ ramps and continue to offer to build a ramp for any needy person in the county. They also provide a "handy man" service to church members.

United Methodist Women have through the years contributed hundreds of personal care kits to the migrant workers on Johns Island through Rural Mission. More recently, however, they have collected school supplies for children in Greenwood schools.

This list does not even include many of the ways Sunday School classes and UMW circles have shared their Christian love beyond the confines of Main Street Church.

The Missions and Outreach Committee sponsors Mission Fairs with displays of many mission projects and outreach opportunities. In 1993 the Hortons, who served in Liberia, visited one Sunday to thank Main Street for its support. In 2000 the church observed Mission Sunday by inviting Will and Agnes Rogers, longtime missionaries to Brazil and grandparents of then Youth Director Adrian Rogers, to preach and speak to Sunday School classes.

A new kind of Mission Event, the Fall Craft and Handiwork Bazaar was held in 2006 and 2007. Groups in the church rent a table for \$30, sell items for their own projects, and the table rent goes to Missions.

When "hands on" help was not possible, Main Street members have through the years responded generously to special offerings. Main Street Church was a pace setter church for the Africa University Campaign, accepting the challenge to raise \$10,000 over four years. James Salley, Vice President for Development, spoke at a Sunday morning worship service on behalf of the campaign.

UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief) offerings for the Oklahoma Tornado Fund, the Kosovo Relief Fund, victims of the earthquake in Bam, Iran, tsunami relief, Hope for the Children of Africa, the Katrina Fund, and the fund to help victims of the 9/11 attack have all had a generous response. Although Main Street may have occasionally been slow to give to a "boring old budget," as one minister said, the church has a reputation for being quick and generous in its giving for outreach opportunities.

PROGRAM

Children

In addition to Sunday School classes in which Main Street's children learn the basics about God,

Jesus Christ, and living a Christian life in creative stimulating ways, a variety of other activities have been available to them for many years. For example, in 1997 the following list of ongoing Children's Ministries appeared in the bulletin: Milestones (children are recognized for learning the books of the Bible, the Lord's Prayer, the Apostles Creed, the Ten Commandments, the Gloria Patri, the Doxology, and selected scripture), choirs, mission projects, Vacation Bible School, Day Camp, Music Camp (later Arts Camp), Kid's Corner and Pew Babies (children pick up a bag and/or a doll to hold their interest during morning worship), Welcome Wigglers (introduction to church service for three-year-olds), Worship Readiness for first graders, acolyte and crucifer training.

In 2001 the children's classes prepared and participated in a Walk through Holy Week during Lent with displays set up on tables around the Fellowship Hall. This has become a meaningful annual learning project. The Advent Festival early in December has become another good time for families and children because it features Christmas crafts for the children and the making of an Advent wreath for each family.

Scouts

For many years Main Street has welcomed Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts to meet in the church. In 2006 the church received a Community Award from Upstate Girl Scouts of the Old 96 Council for being the most generous church in the upstate for providing space and support for Girl Scout troops "to build girls of courage, confidence, and character." Five Girl Scout troops have met in the church, and currently the Girl Scout District office is located in the Susanna Wesley Building. In 2007 a Girl Scout troop, a Boy Scout troop, and a Cub Scout den meet in the church.

Youth

The youth of Main Street are an active segment of the congregation, giving a great deal of time and energy to mission activities. The United Methodist Youth Fellowship has also been involved in Discipleship Groups and learning activities aimed at making Jesus Christ the center of their lives. In 2002 sixth through twelfth graders began meeting for Breakfast Club before school on Monday mornings. At confirmation time for several years adult members of the congregation have expressed their support and solidarity with the young confirmands by placing notes of encouragement, small mementoes, and special scripture passages in individual boxes for each young person.

Adults

Sunday School classes constitute the backbone of the educational ministry of the church for adults. Changes happen even in long standing classes as members become unable to participate. For example, two women's classes and one men's class, the Lawton, Upper Room, and Featherstone, combined in 2005 to form the Trinity Class meeting in the former Lawton Class room. In addition, other current adult classes are the Mason, Hut, Drake, Bible, New Horizons, Paul Frey, Genesis to Revelation, Coach Dula, Cornerstone, and Common Ground.

The classes all have their own special projects and activities. One that involves the entire church is the Bible Class's annual rummage sale, which raises money for a number of worthwhile causes. The Genesis to Revelation Class, organized November 7, 1999, celebrated their almost eight-year trip through the Bible on July 22, 2007, as they "saw a new heaven and a new earth" at the end of the book of Revelation.

Disciple Bible Study

In 1993 the "Becoming Disciples through Bible Study" program was introduced to Main Street by the pastor, Carlos Gardner, and became a mainstay in the program for both adults and youth. This program is an approach to Bible study that emphasizes disciplined reading of and listening to scripture, leading to transformation of individual's lives. A typical class of 12 agrees to devote 34 weeks to the study, meeting once a week for one and a half or more hours. Because classes are added each year, in 2002 five Disciple Classes were being held and 56 people graduated. Additionally, "Christian Believer" and "Jesus and the Gospels," which are similarly designed studies, are offered periodically. A total of 183 have completed at least one of the courses with several more on track in 2007-2008. In 1997 an outgrowth of a Disciple class led by Glenn Williams, who has offered leadership and encouragement to

the Disciple studies for a number of years, was the Backyard Bible Club described earlier.

Prayer

Another outcome of a Disciple class discussion is the Prayer Warrior Ministry. Diana Helfrich told the class about a program in a church in Tennessee that had drawn the church families closer together. Each child in the church from infancy through college age is assigned a volunteer member who agrees to lift that child in prayer each day. Brothers and sisters in families are assigned the same Prayer Warrior. The class members committed themselves to starting and supporting this ministry in Main Street. Patricia Lindell's organizational skills brought it to fruition in June 2000 and continue to nurture the program. In 2007, 188 children and youth are prayed for daily by 146 Prayer Warriors.

Prayer, both personal and organized, is a part of the lives of many Main Street members. In 1997 a group calling themselves the Prayer Chain Fellowship agreed to meet once a month briefly before Sunday School for intercessory prayer and committed themselves to daily prayer for those with special needs. In 2006 the Member Care committee opened the Chapel for prayer for those in the church family with prayer needs, and names for prayer are always listed in the church newsletter.

Stephen Ministry

In 1999 Stephen Ministry began at Main Street. Four Stephen leaders and the pastor, Larry Jenkins, received intensive training, and the leaders in turn trained the first six Stephen Ministers in a 50-hour course which prepared them to give one-on-one confidential care to those in the church suffering from loneliness, depression, illness, and grief, or in other crisis situations. In the years since, four more leaders and 21 additional Stephen Ministers have been trained and stand ready to help those who request it with hour-long weekly visits. They emphasize that they are not professional counselors and that confidentiality is the key to the caring relationship.

Older Adults

Main Street Senior Adults, named Main Streeters in 2003, are a group who enjoy getting together both for interesting programs at the church and for travel opportunities. They have enjoyed day trips to the mountains and closer home to places such as Carter and Holmes Orchid Nursery in Newberry, the Bob Jones Art Museum, and the Burt-Starke House in Abbeville. In 1999 Main Street honored all members 85 and above at a Century Celebration. Thirty-one were able to attend.

Some of the seniors have enjoyed conference events sponsored by the Conference Older Adult Council: retreats at Myrtle Beach and mission events where they did hands-on work at Conference institutions (Epworth Children's Home, the camps, and the retirement centers) as well as at small churches around the conference. These adults have been honored that one of their own, the Rev. Hazel Bennett, an ordained deacon of the United Methodist Church, served as chairperson of the Conference Council and also as chairperson of the general church's United Methodist Committee on Older Adult Ministries.

Main Street's membership and the Greenwood community as a whole have been enhanced by the active presence of a number of Wesley Commons residents. (Wesley Commons is the United Methodist retirement center formerly known as The Greenwood Methodist Home.) These older adults sing in the choir, serve on boards and committees, teach in the church school, contribute financially, and participate in the total program of the church. In 2005 Pastor Jim Dennis began a weekly discussion group at Wesley Commons that he called "Wisdom of the Ages." According to Dennis, the faithful attenders help him think about the scripture which will be his text ten days hence.

United Methodist Women

The women's organization has been a strong force in Main Street Church with monthly circle meetings and less frequent general meetings. Projects and personal pledges to the work of the Women's Division of the Board of Global Ministries have helped support the mission arm of the church. The women promote their Reading Program and give a number of books annually to the Church Library. The circles visit their shut-ins and try to keep them as much a part of the church as possible. Active in the District and Conference organization, the unit has been honored to have Zella Williams as District President and

Marilyn Murphy as Conference President, following in the footsteps of earlier leaders from Main Street.

A special festive day for the United Methodist Women was May 19, 1997, when the organization celebrated its 25th birthday under that name. (The original Woman's Missionary Society began October 5, 1879.) The speaker was Sara Shingler, President of the Women's Division of the General Board of Global Ministries and daughter-in-law of Main Street's own Elizabeth Shingler, now deceased.

Having Conference President Rubielee Addison speak at a general meeting in 1999 was another privilege for the organization.

Also in 1999 the women organized a Teen Circle with Elise Collins as adult leader. The youth were interested, and a couple of them attended the summer School of Christian Mission for two years. But, it was hard to hold their interest as year by year involved young women moved on. Because the future is in the hands of the youth of today, there will surely be another effort in this direction.

For a long time the Main Street United Methodist Women designated the circles with numbers, but that became unwieldy as some older members became unable to attend meetings and circles had to combine forces. The formation of new circles with actual names helped solve the problem. In 2007 the unit is composed of six circles and a group of women who in October 2002 organized and continue to mentor a circle called "Turning Point" at Leath Women's Correctional Center. The other circle names are Believers, Susanna, Heart and Hands, Celebration, Fellowship, and Morning Out Mission (MOM).

United Methodist Men

A group of the men of the church are part of the denomination-wide United Methodist Men organization meeting regularly for food, fellowship, and inspiration. An important service project for the men is the Joseph Ministry, so named because it involves carpentry work. Eight of the men have agreed to build a ramp for anyone needing one in Greenwood County. At this writing they have built twelve in 2007. In addition, a "handy man" service is available for church members; they have installed bars on bathtubs, repaired light fixtures, cut grass, and provided other needed help.

The Gathering

Church social activities involving food are always welcome events. In 1994 a monthly Wednesday evening family gathering began with supper and programs for children, youth, and adults. These gatherings became weekly in September 1995, and different groups in the church became responsible for preparing the meal with proceeds going to their own group projects. Boy Scouts, UMYF, Sunday School classes, Missions and Outreach, and an occasional caterer all practice their cooking skills. After supper the children go to their choir practices, the youth and college students to their meetings, and adults to a program of their own. For several years the September programs were a mission study planned by the UMW and offered to the congregation. From one adult program this has evolved to be an offering of two programs, as widely diverse as learning to shag and studying the Bible.

Sunday Breakfast

Bacon and eggs and grits on Sunday morning before Sunday School has proved popular at Main Street. When Bob Harmon was Building Superintendent, he prepared breakfast for early comers. In July 1996 an announcement in the bulletin gave the welcome news, "Breakfast is back!" Harmon was no longer able to do it, but men of the church stepped in and proved they were up to the task. Each Sunday morning a faithful number break their fast together, both singles and families, adults and children.

WORSHIP

The worship service on Sunday morning is the core activity of the church but certainly not the only time worship takes place. Main Street has continued in the fifteen years covered by this update to offer inspiring services with outstanding music and challenging sermons. Gradual changes have taken place with more and more lay involvement in the service. The foreparents of current Main Street members would no doubt scratch their heads in complete puzzlement at some of the present-day practices. But, some of the hymns, the Lord's Prayer, the Apostles Creed, and the scriptures, albeit from modern

translations, would reassure them.

Special worship services have continued to draw Main Street members and others: The Hanging of the Greens at the beginning of Advent continues; the Moravian Love Feast was observed for a number of years just before Christmas; John Wesley's Covenant Renewal service prepares the congregation for the New Year; Ash Wednesday and Holy Week services help Main Street get ready for the Easter celebration; Independence Day with the Emerald Brass has been a popular holiday service; a Remembrance and Hope service on September 11, 2002, called members "to worship and pray for our nation" on the anniversary of the 9/11 attacks; a Blue Christmas service in 2004 and A Light in the Darkness in 2005 and 2006 acknowledged the pain and sadness many feel during the holiday season. A Fall and a Spring Festival of Faith were held in recent years with outstanding speakers. Main Street has observed Holy Communion during the morning worship service quarterly for many years. In 2000 First Sunday Communion was started in March in the chapel for a monthly observance.

In 2006 the Evangelism Work Area organized a Worship Attendance Crusade from March 19 to Easter with a goal of reaching 10% over the same Sunday in 2005. The pastor congratulated the congregation on reaching 9.4%, just shy of the 10% goal. The children's Sunday School classes increased 200% over the past year for that same period.

From time to time, Main Street has offered early Sunday morning services in addition to the 11 o'clock service. Again in June 1993 an early 8:30 AM service was offered in the sanctuary and continued until March 1994; it resumed just in June and July 1995. In 2006 a new concept of worship was begun, meeting in the Fellowship Hall and called "8:28 Celebrate." With an informal atmosphere, a praise band consisting of guitars, drums, and piano, and words of the praise songs projected on a screen, the pastor remained the anchor of the service. This service appealed to a core group, but when attendance did not increase, the time was changed to 9:00 AM, the name of the service to "OutLoud Contemporary Worship," and the setting to the Asbury Outreach Center gym with promising results.

COMMUNICATIONS

How does Main Street Church get the news out? That challenge has been met in a variety of ways. A mimeographed weekly newsletter which started in the 1970s, The Tie, in 1993 became a part of The South Carolina United Methodist Advocate, printed and mailed from Columbia just for Main Street. An advantage of this partnership was that Main Street United Methodists became much more aware of conference church news. Members Margaret Tinsley and Riley Watson answered the appeal to help the office staff in writing for the paper. Today's readers would find the in depth stories about individual church members delightful. A problem was the very early deadline, but worship service bulletins could give late-breaking announcements. The Advocate/Tie combination ceased publication in 1995 when the Advocate became a monthly paper. From 1995 through 2004 a combination worship bulletin/newsletter was mailed out to members, and in January 2005 these again became separate. An article from the pastor on the front of the newsletter always is an attention-getter. A faithful group of women meets in the library every Wednesday morning to prepare the newsletters for mailing. Although it may go unnoticed, their work, like that of many volunteers, is essential.

Worship services have been broadcast on the radio off and on through the years. Homebound members have appreciated this tie to their church so much that it was sometimes funded outside the church budget by generous donors .

Copy machines have taken the place of mimeograph machines, and computers the place of typewriters. In 1998 the office went online with e-mail, and in 2002 Main Street went hi-tech with a web page. Richard Pinckney designed the web page so that members could receive the newsletter and other important news from the church electronically. Sermons can be read, thanks to Mary Alexander's transposition, or heard as a digital recording on a personal computer by clicking on a website link. Other links connect the computer-savvy member to the wider church.

In 2006 the Council on Ministries formed a Media Committee to develop and coordinate resources for inviting visitors to Main Street Church and for keeping members informed about the many programs and activities available on a daily basis. The first product of this committee was a set of five separate professional style brochures each aimed at a specific Age/Stage of Life group. In 2007 the Committee on Nominations decided to add a new person to the Board of Stewards with the title Communications Coordinator. Main Street is serious about getting out the word that good things are happening at the corner of Main and Cambridge.

Main Street's library, under the loving care of Flo Young, has been an important source of information for many years. The shelves are filled with attractive and helpful children's books, and adults can find commentaries to aid in Bible study, theological works, spiritual life aids, and a complete section devoted to United Methodist Women Reading Program books including youth books (all available to the church as a whole.)

BEYOND THE LOCAL CHURCH

Main Street United Methodist Church is by definition a connectional church and part of the global community of United Methodists. The Greenwood District and the South Carolina Annual Conference are the closest connections, and Main Street has through the years had representation on a number of the committees, boards, and agencies of this wider church. The late Dr. Harry Irwin chaired the United Methodist Foundation Board, Lomax Murphy was on the Board of Trustees of the conference for eight years, Dr. Mary Lynn Polk was chairperson of the Communications Commission and currently serves on the Board of Church and Society, the late Dr. Ann Warner served on the Commission on Equitable Salaries, Bayard Lindell is on the Board of Health and Welfare Ministries, and Marilyn Murphy was elected in 2006 to chair the board of The South Carolina United Methodist Advocate. The Rev. Dr. Ted Morton, one of Main Street's very active retired ministers, served as chairperson of the Board of Pensions and Health Benefits. The annual conference elected Marilyn Murphy a member of the South Carolina delegation to the Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference in 2000, 2004, and 2008. In 2004 she served with distinction on the General Conference delegation. (I think there are more which I need to find. Maybe this should be in the Appendix? I have found several more.)

In addition to transacting business the Annual Conference presents awards to individuals and churches. In 2000 Glenn Williams received the prestigious Denman Evangelism Award. Also that year the Rev. Harry R. Mays posthumously received the Herbert Hucks, Jr., Award for Historical Preservation and Interpretation of Methodism in South Carolina. In 2007 Harriet Mays, who had served as editor of The Mark, the conference Historical Society newsletter for ten years, received the Hucks Award as well.

In February 2004 the Main Street Charge Conference recommended Kathy Carr as a Certified Candidate for the ordained ministry. Kathy already had a seminary degree from Emory and had been involved in social work for some time, visitation for Main Street, and significant volunteer work. At Annual Conference in 2007 she was appointed to the Main Street-Pine Grove Charge in McColl, South Carolina.

Added to the roll call of young people from Main Street Church to enter the ministry is the name of Steve Rice. Steve attended Candler School of Theology at Emory. In 2002 the newsletter contained a note of thanks to the church for financial support while he was in seminary and serving as a student pastor at Calhoun Falls United Methodist Church. Steve then served as associate minister at Grace Church in North Augusta. During that time he decided he could best answer God's call to ministry in the Episcopal Church, and that is where he is now serving.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Churches in the 21st century are not immune to the pressures and dangers outside their walls. Main Street has chosen to be pro-active in the face of at least some of these pressures.

In 2007 the church fielded a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT). After an extensive training program to prepare them to respond to a wide range of emergency situations, five members (Bill

Logan, Caroline Dennis, Karl Kelly, Jim Kelly, and Joe Chandler) are on call 24 hours a day.

Another sign of the times has been the adoption of the conference-recommended Safe Sanctuaries program by Main Street Church. A response to the dangers faced by children and youth from predators, this program was instituted at Main Street in 2007. It requires thorough background checks of all persons in the church coming into contact with the children and youth and training of all leaders and parents. Church school leaders knew it was best to be pro-active in this situation.

In 2003 the trustees decided to install a security system for the church office, a far cry from the days when churches prided themselves on leaving their doors unlocked. Now, except when meetings are in progress, one needs to ring the bell or know the code to open the door.

Earlier the Board of Stewards, following legal advice, decided to incorporate to protect staff, officers, and members from possible lawsuits.

Conflicts outside the United States concerned Main Street members in personal ways. In March 2004 the church welcomed Jim Klauber home after his ten-month tour of duty with the National Guard in Kosovo. R. J. Feith served in Iraq during _____. In 2006 the congregation prayed with the Kinard family as they watched and waited at the bedside of the severely wounded Lt. Andrew Kinard, grandson of Bettye and Bennett Kinard. Weekly prayers are offered for him and others in harm's way who are related to Main Street families.

HISTORY ROOM

On March 7, 1993, the church's History Committee threw an autograph party for the new History book and its author, Harry R. Mays. In The Tie/Advocate that week was a glowing article by Margaret Tinsley praising the book and author. She also gave credit to the History Task Force composed of Betsy Cureton, chairperson, Hennie Cox, Lalia Huguley, Bettye Kinard, Becky Melton, Gee Poe, Clara Rodgers, and Nettie Spraker.

In 1994 Miriam Alewine became chairperson of the History Committee whose members were Dr. James A. Cheezem, Harry R. Mays, Mildred Y. Scurry, and Ruth Moore Thomas. Miriam Alewine has worked tirelessly to give Main Street Church a beautiful, useful History Room, completely outside the church budget. The first room occupied the area opposite the side entrance to the sanctuary (now part of the choir room). It was an inviting space to display artifacts, pictures, and church historical items. This History Room was dedicated on November 17, 1996. When renovation plans required this space for the choir room, the History Room was moved upstairs into the Cokesbury Building opposite the Mason Class Room. In 1996 Miriam and Fred Alewine published and donated a descriptive booklet detailing the contents of the History Room and containing a brief history update by Harry Mays.

SPECIAL GIFTS AND HONORS

At the worship service on Sunday, March 24, 1994, Main Street members basked in reflected glory when one of the church's most beloved members received the highest civilian honor that a citizen of South Carolina can receive, the Order of the Palmetto. Margaret Tinsley received the honor for her service to Lander University, Main Street United Methodist Church, and those less fortunate than herself. Awarded to those who have demonstrated outstanding service and dedication to their community and state, the Order of the Palmetto could not have found a more worthy recipient.

From time to time families want to express their love for the church through honoring the memory of loved ones who have joined the Church Triumphant. Such was the case with the daughters of Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Taylor. In 1997 Mrs. Clarence G. Arnold, Mrs. W. A. Barnette, Jr., Mrs. E. Gayle Poe, and Mrs. J. Ed Smith placed the Hanging Cross above the choir loft in memory of their parents.

Anonymous donors gave a lovely gift to the church in 2004. Being aware of an unsightly and

inaccessible area outside the windows of the inside entrance to the fellowship hall, they had installed three colorful stained glass windows depicting Jesus' baptism, Jesus and the children, and Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. Generations to come of Main Street children, youth, and adults will appreciate this added beauty to their church.

CONCLUSION